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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4209

February 5, 2020

Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

I'm writing to express my grave concern over the nominations you've made to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Board of Directors during your presidency. Under your leadership, the TVA Board will only have one woman and zero persons of color.

This lack of diversity is shameful and is not representative of the region TVA is congressionally mandated to serve, which is made up of ten million people in parts of seven southeastern states. In order to best serve the Tennessee Valley, I strongly believe that the TVA Board of Directors should be representative of its customers.

In my home state of Tennessee, where TVA provides power to virtually the entire state, the demographics of the population include: 78.5 percent white persons and 17.1 percent black or African American persons.¹ In my district, which comprises most of the City of Memphis, the population consists of 29.1 percent white persons and 64.2 percent black or African American persons.² Additionally, 51.2 percent and 52.6 percent of Tennessee and Memphis' population is made up of women. With these demographics, it is perplexing that there is not a single person of color on the Board nor more than one woman.

In the past, under President Obama's leadership, I have been proud to recommend outstanding candidates for the TVA Board of Directors such as V. Lynn Evans and Ronald Walter, both of whom served the TVA admirably. It is disheartening to see a discontinuation of diversity on the Board of Directors under your administration.

¹ United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts: Tennessee," July 1, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TN>

² United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts: Memphis," July 1, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/memphiscitytennessee>

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Unfortunately, your disregard for diversity is just as evident in your Cabinet. Of the 23 acting members of your Cabinet, there are only four women and one African American. With an America that is becoming increasingly diverse and currently has 50.8% women and 23.5% non-white persons, the lack of diversity in your Cabinet shows a lack of awareness and concern.

I believe our diversity as a nation is something to both be celebrated and respected by elected officials and policy makers at the highest levels of government. I strongly urge you to consider diversity when you are nominating officials for top-level positions in your administration.

Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress